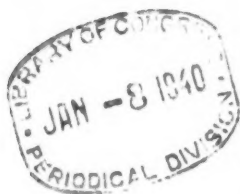


The AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

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By ROGER SHERMAN HOAR, M.A., LL.B.

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The Old Editor

MEETING THE RATE CUTS

Of late there has been much ado about pulp rates dropping all along the line. Authors blame editors. Editors blame authors. But in behalf of the pulp editors, it isn't all their fault. Established pulp authors have been too willing to sell their Class A rejects to Class B markets, and under their own names.

For instance, Author Writewell has been getting 2 cents from Magazine A. But Editor A sees Writewell in a magazine B paying 1½ cents. So he says to Writewell: "As long as you sell to Magazine B at 1½ cents, why should I pay you 2 cents?"

Authors will have to stick to one rate or use pen-names for cheaper markets. True, some stories by the same author are worth more than others—but not to the reader. He sees a story by Author Writewell in a cheap magazine and he expects it to be just as good as one by that author in a Class A Magazine. If authors' names mean anything on a cover, they should mean as much in one magazine as in another.

In my opinion, the thing for Author Writewell to do is to set a minimum rate for the cover name Writewell. If he gets a reject from Magazine A, then sell to Magazine B under a different name. He might use Writewell for 2-cent markets, Writegood for 1½-cent, Writefair for 1-cent markets and Justwrite for the ½-cent markets. It isn't fair for an editor paying 2 cents and featuring Writewell, to have to compete with markets also featuring Writewell but paying only a cent.

If editors know that they cannot get Author Writewell's name for less than 2 cents, then they will pay it for a good story. But as long as Writewell says, "I need the money and will take what I can get"—he will find his rates dropping instead of increasing. An author, like a merchant, must have different grades and product names, for once a rate is cut, it stays there for that product. You can't blame that on editors.

THE OLD EDITOR.

THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

January, 1940

LEISURE DOESN'T HELP

... By KATHLEEN MOW



Kathleen Mow

"If only I had the time, what stories I could write. *If only I had the time!*"

Does that wail sound familiar to you? It's an old one to me, for I must have used it thousands of times. I wanted to write, I needed to write, but I was much too busy to manage the volume of

work I knew I was capable of getting out.

I had a position, one which required exacting, serious concentration for long hours at a time. One which made severe demands upon my strength and my mental alertness. Later I had housework to do, work which so often interfered with my brave plans to adhere to a writing schedule.

Still later I spent long hours taking care of an invalid—and snatching moments for my writing in an alcove from which I could hear every movement in the sick room.

If only I had more time, I kept thinking. Time actually to work out my plots, time to develop them, time to write all the stirring, touching stories that are lying in the back of my brain, waiting to be put down upon paper.

And all the while I WAS writing! During all of those hectic, busy years I was producing material that sold, material that provided me with a living!

Now I've got that leisure I wanted so ter-

Kathleen Mow, frequent contributor to A. & J. pages, was one of the recent winners of a \$1000 Maciadden True Story prize—which indicates that she "battled through" the slump described in this article. When last we heard from her, she was laid up in the hospital with both legs and right arm broken as a result of an auto accident—in spite of which she was determinedly teaching herself to write—and to turn out stories—with her left hand.

ribly. Now I've got all the time I need for writing all those precious, wonderful stories—and what am I doing with it?

Nothing.

That's the truth. Oh, of course I'm turning out material. Every week I turn out something. But almost invariably it's flat, insipid, lifeless. And also valueless.

Why?

That's what I'm trying to determine for myself as well as for you who may be reading this. And I think I know the answer.

It takes pressure to get your work out. The steady, insistent pressure of *living!* If you're perturbed, concerned, worried about life, you're bound to take a vital interest in it. And that interest is going to reflect in your work. The experiences through which you are moving are grippingly *real* to you. You feel them, you breathe them—you write them in all the simple earnestness of which you are capable.

When you can do that, your editors nod their heads and murmur that wonderful word, "Convincing," and your public cries, "Give us more."

That's when you dig in with all the fury of your nature and turn out as much material as your time and energy will permit, and the despairing cry goes up from the very depths of your heart, "If only I had more time!"

Don't be misled, my friends. Time wouldn't do you a bit of good. I know. Let me give you a look at the other side of the picture.

As I said, I've got plenty of time. I've got other things too, everything any writer ought to need. Long, glorious, sunny days; a comfortable, adequate study; a reasonably good personal library; good working materials; excellent

Ms. A. 9.2. 7/42

ESSENTIALS OF RADIO PLAYWRITING

. . . By WILLIAM L. KING

This series began in the August, 1939, issue.

X: THE COMMON DENOMINATOR

To explain this essential of radio plays, let it be supposed that there is an automobile collision at a street intersection. A crowd gathers. Five people, a dozen, perhaps as many as a hundred quickly converge on the spot. If the remarks could be overheard, the following might well be a cross section:

ELDERLY LADY: Blood! Oh . . . (FAINTS)

WAITRESS: Look, Dot! If that dress isn't a Sak model I'm curaz-zy—And now look at it!

SCHOOLBOY: Hey, Pete. Look at the way that radiator's wrapped around the engine. Gee!

HOUSEWIFE: That ambulance'd better get here in a hurry.

DOCTOR: You her sister? It's just a compound fracture and a slight concussion.

SISTER: (SOBBING) It'll break Mom's heart—And after forbidding her to go out with him!

LAWYER: Here mister— Sign here and we'll get fifty thousand at least.

And so on. The emotional reaction of each of the onlookers would differ according to his individual emotional nature. *No two people feel the same reaction to the same degree, even when the emotional stimulus is identical.*

Radio's case, with the many divergent types that compose its audience, is much the same as that exemplified by the auto accident. One of the radio writer's biggest problems is to find the common denominator of that audience. The one sure method is to paint the dramatic picture as deftly as possible, then allow each individual to react as he will.

The first step in so painting the dramatic picture is to be meticulous in establishing motivation. In other words, if Jane, one of the characters in a play, bursts out in a spontaneous fit of sobbing, for no apparent reason, or for a reason only sketchily indicated, the audience is bound to find itself out of tune with the emotional values of the play. On the other hand, if the conditions that lead up to the crying are first carefully depicted, then at the point where Jane gives vent to her sorrow, the listeners are likely to feel at least a degree of the same emotion. *The circumstances leading up to the emotion constitute the actual stimulus as far as the audience is concerned, not the final venting of the emotion by the character in the play.*

The second principle for attaining the common denominator of the radio audience is, when the emotional crux is finally reached, not to prolong the display of emotion too long. Or, to

be professional, not to "spread on too thickly."

Unless a radio writer has achieved the ultimate in artistry, the emotions to which he gives rise in his audience will never reach the intensity that they would if the audience were undergoing the same things in their own actual lives. While audience emotions are genuine enough when induced by an accomplished writer, they are but second-hand at best. It is advisable for the radio writer not to try to prolong any one emotional state too greatly and to be reticent with emotional display on the part of his characters. If Jane has established a good reason to cry, then let her cry—softly, preferably, even though the sorrow may have the poignancy of a knife—hold it a few seconds, then get it over.

After all, the greatest power of an artist lies in *suggestion*, not photographic exactitude.

A particularly fine illustration of this delicate touch was given in a Christmas broadcast of "One Man's Family" some years ago—in 1935, if memory serves faithfully. All the members of the Barbour family had assembled in the Barbour living room after the Christmas dinner. Peace and good-will of the deepest sort had settled upon the group. Then mother Barbour started to play "Silent Night, Holy Night," with a strong but delicate touch on the piano keys. After the first few bars, when the hallowed charm of the old, old favorite had worked its magic on the family—and upon the listeners—Claudia said, quite matter-of-factly, "Hold my hand, Nicky." That was all. The music continued. Yet, in that simple sentence, delivered very matter-of-factly without any sentimental wishy-washiness, millions of listeners found a deeply sounding echo of their own feelings.

If Claudia had emoted to even a slightly greater degree, or if Nicky had replied by breathing even so much as the word "Darling!" there are those in the audience who would have experienced a slight degree of distaste at the excessive sweetness. As it was, the dramatic picture was all set, Claudia gave the cue, and each listener reacted to a greater or lesser degree according to individual emotional capacity.

XI: FORM

It now becomes essential that the radio play be given *form*.

Two thousand years ago Aristotle stated that a play must have a *beginning*, a *middle*, and an

end. This appears at first glance to be a redundant statement, but upon further thought it is seen to set a drama off as definitely as a fence sets off the domain of one property owner from another's.

For instance, it brings home the fact that the beginning of a play must be chosen with an eye to utility and with a keenly developed sense of dramatic values. A radio playwright must weigh each factor that he utilizes in the opening, discarding all those that do not help to grasp listener attention and retaining those that are of dynamic help in attracting attention, building the plot, and giving the illusion of life.

In determining what a radio playwright should retain and what discard, it must be realized that no two writers would treat the same subject in the same manner; however, there are certain values which must be achieved.

For instance, the audience likes to know who the characters are. Thus, it is well to identify them as quickly as possible by the names they will use throughout the play. Using the plot developed in a previous article in illustrating a plot formula, the opening lines could well be as follows:

UNCLE: (COMING UP) Oh, there you are, Don.
DON: Been looking for me, Uncle Ben?

That tells us who each character is, even before he speaks.

Setting is another important item at the very outset of a radio play. A listener likes to know *where* he is supposed to be, and the sooner he is told, the sooner the play begins to build up the illusion of life for him. So the third line of the present play can logically give some inkling, thus:

UNCLE: I was just wondering how the house is for tonight.

The setting is not given a very concrete form in this instance, for while "house" will align itself with "theatre" in a few minds, it cannot be expected that many will so identify it. So, while this may suffice temporarily, the composite setting, or enough other details to enable the listeners to fabricate the composite setting for themselves, will have to be given as soon after this as possible.

The next essential to be provided in a play is a statement of the *condition* and of the *opposition*, since the burden of the play depends upon the struggle that develops between the two. So, in order to answer Uncle's question, and to supply these two factors, the dialogue would shape up somewhat as follows:

DON: Sold out.

UNCLE: You've been making a fine record as manager of this road company, my boy.

DON: It's a good show.

UNCLE: Granted. But what's so interesting about that call-board? You're staring at it so.

DON: Trying to find a singer on it, I suppose.

UNCLE: Singer?

DON: Yes. A soprano lead.

UNCLE: But Donna?

DON: Laryngitis.

UNCLE: Laryngitis?

DON: Right.

UNCLE: That's bad. Very bad.

DON: With her understudy over with "B" road company—you're putting it mildly.

UNCLE: And the house sold out— Hm m m m m m.

So it is that the *condition*, Don's position as manager of the show, and the *opposition*, the sickness of the feminine star, are introduced, or in show parlance, *planted*. In addition, enough details of setting have been given by this time to enable the listener to build up a composite setting.

So far, then, the necessary introduction of characters, setting, condition, opposition, suspense, and even atmosphere (in the use of backstage terms) has been admirably attained, all in only fifteen brief lines and some forty seconds or less. But, while this serves perfectly for an example, there is a definite drawback to such a start, even aside from the fact that such a presentation of the bare skeleton of drama leaves much to be desired. It is too abrupt, too intense. After such an intense start there will be a decided let-down in the emotional stress of the listeners.

Even though the plot may furnish the required dramatic material to stop the emotional let-down and to buoy it up, the state of tenseness, continuing, will lead eventually to a natural reaction on the part of the listener, at the same time wrecking simplicity and clearness. It is better, by far, to relax the opening dramatic action and build up to the first emotional suspense *gradually*. This allows for a more even tempo throughout the rest of the play, with resultant clearness and lucidity.

So we rewrite it a bit, giving Don some individuality and personality through voice directions, and developing the dramatic action in a way more in keeping with the audience's ability to react emotionally. It is also well to give Don the first line, since he is the lead.

DON: (COMING UP) (PEPPY) Oh, here you are backstage, Uncle Ben—

UNCLE: Been looking for me?

DON: Not particularly.

UNCLE: (BENIGN) How's the theatre for tonight?

DON: (HAPPY) Sold out.

UNCLE: In spite of the snowstorm last night—!

DON: (HAPPY) Yep. This show sure packs 'em in—

UNCLE: And you've done a good job managing this road company ever since—er—that is—for the past three years—.

DON: (A TRIFLE GRIMLY) Well—it was work or go under. And this show—? Well—"Blossom Festival" sure is a peach!

UNCLE: Sorry I reminded you of—the other.

DON: (GOOD-NATURED) Ah, forget it—
How's the company look?

UNCLE: Fine, fine! And that change you made in
the book was okey, too.

DON: It suited Donna better— (PARENTHETIC-
ALLY) Come on into the office.

SOUND EFFECT: DOOR OPENS AND CLOSSES
BEHIND FOLLOWING LINES.

UNCLE: By the way—how was Donna this morn-
ing?

DON: I called the hospital— She's still got a slight
cold.

UNCLE: She be able to sing tonight?

DON: Huh— She's *got* to! Her understudy in Chi-
cago with "B" road company and Broadway
three hundred miles away—!

UNCLE: Yes—it *would* be hard to get someone to
go on in her place—it'd mean you'd have to
cancel for the next week or maybe more.

DON: The doctor's supposed to phone me here at
the theatre and give me his report— Leavin'
soon?

UNCLE: Yep— In fact I just stopped over here to
say goodbye—

DON: Goin' back to New York?

UNCLE: No-o-o— I think I'll drop in on one or
two of the other road companies first—
(FADES) Guess I might 's well go on over
to the hotel and get my spare collar—

SOUND EFFECT:—TELEPHONE BELL RINGS.

UNCLE: (BACK) The phone—

DON: I'll get it, Uncle.

SOUND EFFECT: LIFTS RECEIVER.

DON: Hello—? Mr. Vince? Which one—?

UNCLE: (COMING UP) For me—?

DON: (ASIDE) No— (TO TELEPHONE) All
right—I'll hold the line. (TO UNCLE) It's
the doctor now. (TO PHONE) Hello— Doc-
tor Jones? Yes—? (CRESTFALLEN) Oh—
I see— Well—ll— All right. Thanks, Doctor.

SOUND EFFECT: HANGS UP RECEIVER.

TICK PAUSE:

UNCLE: Well?

DON: (HEAVILY) Donna can't sing tonight.

This latter treatment of the opening does a
number of things the first one did not do. It
establishes the relative time of year (snowfall)
and the relative location of the town in which
the show is playing (300 miles from New
York). These may not be absolutely necessary
to the plot, but they help to build up the illu-
sion of real life.

And the main purpose of the rewriting—to
delay the crossing of the condition by the oppo-
sition—has been accomplished. This time, too,
it has been done more dramatically. The au-
dience has had the dramatic scene painted for
it by the revelation that the seats are all sold, that
Donna's failure to sing will mean a week's can-
cellation and the spoiling of Don's record as a
manager. As a result of this, when Don hangs
up the telephone receiver and says, in a dead
voice, "Donna can't sing tonight," the radio au-
dience will feel the disappointment almost as
keenly as does Don.

Instead of using the major struggle as a snare
for audience interest soon after the opening line,
the result has been accomplished by introducing
an *interest* factor: this was the uncle's slip ref-



"But I only submitted two!"

erence to a "something" that happened three
years previously in Don's life. What it tends
to make the audience wonder also, and the prob-
ability is that listeners will linger on to find out,
or at least long enough to have their interest
further ensnared by the introduction of the pri-
mary struggle.

Such interest factors can be very valuable
adjuncts to a radio play—more so than in a
stage play—and their use can well be culti-
vated.

The exact limits between the *beginning*, *mid-
dle*, and *end* of a play are not well marked, but
neither are they important. For present pur-
poses, let it be supposed that the *middle* begins
immediately after the crossing of the opposition
and condition.

The dramatic action of the middle part of
the play concerns, chiefly, the favoring of first
one side, then the other. This alternation can
be pointedly illustrated by selecting further
lines from the same play. After Don's disap-
pointment at Donna's being unable to appear
that night a moment is allowed for the audience
to savor this emotion, a moment when the op-
position has the upper hand. Then the tide turns
with:

UNCLE: Well, Don (CLEARS THROAT)—I
think I've a way out for you.

DON: (HOPEFULLY) No kidding!

UNCLE: Yes. In fact, I've already made the—ah—
arrangements.

But after a few more lines,

DON: Say—! You look sort o' guilty. *Just* what
have you done?

UNCLE: Well, Don—you know when Donna's
throat commenced hurting right after the per-
formance last night—?

DON: (SEMI-HARD) Yes—
 UNCLE: (HASTILY) I wired for Jeanne—
 DON: (FOGGY) You mean you sent a telegram to New York and—
 UNCLE: —And asked Jeanne to catch the first train.
 DON: *Here?*
 UNCLE: I was afraid you wouldn't like it—but—yes.
 DON: But Uncle Ben! You *couldn't*!
 UNCLE: O.K. There's just one thing for me to do. Meet the train and send her back.

And again the opposition holds the trumps, until,

SOUND EFFECT: KNOCK ON DOOR.

UNCLE: (FADES) I'll see who it is.

SOUND EFFECT: DOOR OPENS (BEHIND NEXT LINE)

DON: (LOUDER) And whoever he is—I don't want to see him.

JEANNE: (COMING UP) (CALMLY) What about a *her*, Don?

Thus, with Jeanne's arrival there is hope that she will be able to substitute and again that the performance will go on—hope, that is, until the opposition again makes a *touche*.

As given here, the reversals seem to have happened one right after the other, but that is because many lines have been eliminated in between. These lines gave additional characterization, business, background, motivation, setting, and color—all of which is also a function of the *middle*.

The final division—the *end*—can be said to start just before the *climax*. The climax is the

point upon which all of the various issues which occurred in the play are focused so that the warring factions are evenly balanced and poised for a final, decisive set-to. Immediately following the climax comes the *denouement*, wherein either one side or the other is definitely shown to be the victor.

The remainder of the play after the denouement is called the *falling action*. This is one of the parts in a radio play where particular care must be exercised, for all of the probable questions of the audience must be answered herein, if they have not been answered previously. For instance, in the play which has been used as a guinea pig, the question of Donna's illness was brought up. It is likely that by the time the climax is reached the audience will have forgotten all about her, but just in case it has not, it is best to satisfy curiosity by some such line as:

DON: —and you'll keep the part until Donna gets better?

JEANNE: Yes. Then—after that—

DON: You'll be singing the Love Song for me privately—

JEANNE: —forever!

And a final admonition: With the struggle decided at the denouement and dramatic action thus all but exhausted, the audience will find its interest quickly evaporating. It is therefore essential for the playwright to keep the falling action as short and punchy as possible.

(Next month Mr. King will discuss the important subject of marketing.)

BOOKS RECEIVED

POEMS EDITORS BUY, A Textbook of Verse Marketing. Edith Cherrington, Compiler-Publisher. Star-News Pub. Co., Box 3386, Pasadena, Calif. \$3.50.

This compilation is of undoubted importance to verse writers. It is a combination of textbook, anthology, and marketing guide. The primary purpose is to answer the poet's constant question, "Where can I sell this verse?" The author has listed over 200 magazines using verse, giving the usual specific market information (address, editor's name, rates, etc.) and in a large number of instances has presented a specific message from the editor telling what he or she looks for in a poem. This is followed by representative examples of poems used in the publication discussed. The markets are classified in the following sections: Superior Poetry, Poetry for Women, Poetry of General Interest, Specialized Verse, Denominational Magazines, Juvenile Magazines, and Verse Magazines. Poems by Catherine Cate Coblenz, Elias Lieberman, and Mary Carolyn Davies, which appeared in THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST, are included.

WRITING AND SELLING SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLES, by Helen M. Patterson. Prentice-Hall, Inc., \$3.65.

The author of this 578-page book is assistant professor of journalism at the University of Wisconsin. It is a comprehensive textbook on the subject, replete with examples, exercises, and analyses of published feature articles. A few of the main headings are: Feature Writing as a Career or Avocation. Finding Ideas and Material for Features. Slanting Articles to Publica-

tions. Planning and Outlining the Article. Writing the Article. Composing the Title. Revising the Manuscript. Preparation of the Manuscript. Illustrating the Feature Article. Legal Rights of Manuscripts.

MY FORMULA FOR FICTION AND MY JUVENILE SUCCESS SECRETS. By Will Herman, 766 Hippodrome Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio. Each \$2.00; both \$3.50.

These books, issued in mimeographed form, are packed with useful information for writers in the fields indicated. Several of Mr. Herman's articles on writing juvenile material, largely concerned with the topic of producing short miscellany on a quantity basis, have appeared in THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST. The emphasis in both books is on juvenile material. Not the least valuable parts of both books are the detailed suggestions for subjects to write about. Mr. Herman himself has sold juvenile manuscripts to the number of many thousands and conducts a course in the subject.

ARGOT, A Dictionary of Underworld Slang. Columbia Pub. Co., P. O. Box 903, Seattle, Wash.

There is a real demand among authors for authoritative reference books of this type, and this seems to fill the bill. The vernacular of the underworld is peculiar to itself, and here are 56 close-packed pages of words, terms, and definitions, presented, it is stated by the anonymous author, as a result of over 25 years experience in law enforcement work and close observation of the underworld.

PRIZES AND AWARDS IN POETRY MARKETS

. . . By VIRGINIA SCOTT MINER



Virginia Scott Miner

THE first of all prizes and payments is simply achieving print. It is, however, easier to be published, harder to be paid, in the verse field than in any other. For that reason, the verse-writer is unusually dependent upon those "prizes and awards" which are the half-way point between cash pay-

ment and no payment at all.

Some of the verse magazines do pay. *Poetry* awarded six prizes of a hundred dollars each last year in addition to the original payment for the poems used. Then there are the fifteen to forty dollars an issue prizes offered by *The Lyric*, *Kaleidograph*, *Shards*, and *The Westminster Magazine*. There are such special attractions as the annual book publication contests which *Kaleidograph* features along with an annual anthology. *The Lantern* usually does one or the other, too, and also devotes one of its issues to the work of some one contributor. The prizes dwindle from \$12 a month to \$1 (or a subscription to the magazine); from autographed copies of really good books to left-over brochures donated by Jane Doe or her publisher. Slight, though, as the actual value may be, a prize is a prize, and—to the beginner, at least—the first prize of all was simply to have reached print.

When, at the beginning of the previous paragraph, we said that "some" verse magazines do pay, and then mentioned only *Poetry*, that was an indication of the gulf between returns from Miss Monroe's celebrated "magazine of verse" and the customary rates of the others. No other "pay" magazine in the field actually offers more than a dollar a poem without making some condition such as requiring the contributor to become a member or a subscriber.

That fact is not mentioned necessarily as criticism. In these days, filled with wars and rumors of war, the editors have their quota of

problems. Most general magazines are not adding to the space allotted to poetry and several are using so little as to be practically out of the market.

That means that competition is likely to be still greater for those places which use and pay for poetry. Writers who do not relish an overstocked cupboard, then, are likely to find themselves considering with renewed interest the field of verse magazines. They should begin to learn what to expect in the way of payment, prizes, promptness, and even such a simple matter as whether they may expect a "contributor's copy."

Of course, the poet who has sufficient faith in his work may say that he will let his literary cupboard fill to overflowing before he'll start giving his work away. That's all right. Some poets can wait. Others do wait. But, for the great majority, there are lessons to be learned only by seeing how the things actually look on a printed page—some page—but now, not posthumously!

If it sounds crassly commercial to place some emphasis on cash, let it. If it sounds smug now to mention the matter of "good company," let it. For next to receiving a substantial check is the satisfaction of facing, across the page, some well-known and sincerely respected name. In this intangible return, the literary quarterlies, frequently sponsored and edited by some university group, offer unusual possibilities. In *The University Review*, for instance, a newcomer's poem may face the words of Witter Bynner—or Diego Rivera. In *Poet Lore* you may be a fellow contributor with Franz Werfel; in *Fantasy* with Kenneth Patchen or Joy Davidman.

And how meek should the verse-writer be? What lower limits should he set in giving away his work? No one can answer that, exactly. He should certainly cast a wary glance at any scheme which makes him pay simply to secure publication. He might perhaps decide to limit his list to those magazines which at least send him a contributor's copy when his verse appears. As contributor's copies arrive, then he will have an opportunity for comparison. If he is seriously interested in becoming a better craftsman, the very fact of seeing his work in print is likely to be both a stimulant and an irritant. Weak-

Mrs. Miner, in addition to contributing to many of the verse magazines, has been represented by poems in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, *New York Times*, *Sun*, *Herald-Tribune*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Household Magazine*, *National Parent-Teacher*. She is represented in *The Textbook of American Poetry Markets and Contemporary American Women Poets*.

nesses which typing had somehow concealed show up, in print, like stop-lights. He will find, too, that the better magazines (and, in the general field, the more remunerative ones) will treat poems to no editorial doctoring without consent; they will not misprint so grossly—and not nearly so often. The better one is paid, in one way or another, the safer he is about the way his brain-child will eventually be clothed. Obversely, there is no publication so modest, so impoverished, but some one may spot a good poem in it and decide to give the unheard-of writer a hand. There is no reputable verse magazine, for that matter, whether or not it so much as sends contributors' copies, but is

used as a mine for reprinting. Some of the reprints may be buried as obscure fillers, but some of these literary waifs may also find second homes in such widely read columns as *The New York Herald-Tribune's* "Week of Verse."

These must be, however, the successive goals of most verse writers: to secure publication in as good company as possible; to be paid, or to be guiltless of paying for publication; to have a copy, at least, of one's verse whenever and wherever it appears. Then, if it is financially possible, the writer might very well select one or more of the verse magazines which interest him most, and subscribe.

THE AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST'S ANNUAL HANDY MARKET LIST OF

VERSE MAGAZINES

Compiled by VIRGINIA SCOTT MINER

(Abbreviations employed: M-25—monthly, 25c a copy; Q—quarterly, etc. Cc.—sends contributor's copy. Acc.—payment on acceptance. Pub.—payment on publication.)

VERSE MAGAZINES MAKING CASH PAYMENT

Poetry, a Magazine of Verse, 232 E. Erie St., Chicago, Ill. Founded by the late Harriet Monroe. George Dillon, editor. (M-25) Pays 25c a line. Pub. Six prizes of \$100 each given last year and expects to award as many this year. Cc. Reports in one week.

Poetry Presents, P. O. Box 12, Burbank, Calif. C. Henry Hicks, editor. (Q-35) \$1 a poem. "We take plenty of time about reporting. Want only original, unpublished verse submitted." Cc.

Rhythm, 925 Broadway, New York, N. Y. Alice Langley, editor. (M-25) 20c a line. Pub.

Sonnet Sequences, Box 1231, Washington, D. C. Murray L. and Hazel S. Marshall, editors. (M-10) Petrarchan sonnets only. \$1 each for single sonnets; varying rates for a sequence. Cc. "Report as soon as possible."

Spirit, 386 Fourth Ave., New York, N. Y. John Gilland Brumfi, editor. (Bi-M-35) Organ of the Catholic Poetry Society of America. Publishes work of members only, but has no religious requirements as to membership. (Fee, \$1 a year). Members may have free criticism on rejected MSS., if they request it at the time of submission. Pays 20c a line. Pub. Cc. Two weeks. "If criticism is requested, three to four weeks."

Westward, 990 E. 14th St., San Leandro, Calif. Hans A. Hoffman, editor. (8 issues—\$2) "Interested in good verse of all kinds." Prizes: one life subscription awarded each yr.; books. Payment of \$1 a poem, but made to subscribers only. Cc. "Within 24 hrs. after MS. arrives."

VERSE MAGAZINES OFFERING SOME DEFINITELY SCHEDULED CASH PRIZES

Bard, The, 398 Russell Ave., Jackson, Mo. Margaret Ferguson Henderson, editor. (Q-35) Three prizes each issue of \$1 each or, to non-subscribers, a year's subscription. An annual award of \$5. "Report promptly as possible."

Blue Moon, 1830 R St., N.W., Washington, D.C. Inez Sheldon Tyler, editor. (Q-50) Prizes \$1 to \$10 each issue. Prefers short, not too sophisticated poems. No Cc. Ten days.

Harvest, 2443 S. E. Division St., Portland, Ore. Merle Beynon, ed. (Q-25) Pays 5c a line for "exceptionally good poems of social vision or satire." Prefers under 25 lines but uses up to 48 line poems. Less love poetry, more of the American scene. Short prose articles on American culture wanted.

Kaleidograph, 702 N. Vernon St., Dallas, Texas. Vaida and Whitney Montgomery, editors. (M-25, \$2 a year) Features an annual book publication contest. A \$25 prize each quarter. Prefers short, rhymed lyrics. Monthly prize of \$1—if winner is not a subscriber a six months subscription. Tries to report in two weeks.

L'Alouette, 114 Riverside Ave., Medford, Mass. C.A.A. Parker, editor. (Q-25) "Overstocked for two years." Cc. Reports in one month.

Lyric, The, Box 2552, Roanoke, Va. Leigh Hanes, editor; Geoffrey Johnson, British editor. (Q-25) No taboos as to type of verse, but uses more short lyrics "with sincerity and freshness." Not interested in any but the best of contemporary work. Offers the annual Richmond Lyric prize of \$50. Cc. Rather slow in reporting.

Poetry World, 79 Fourth Ave., New York, N. Y. Henry Harrison, editor. Any form or theme considered, modern-experimental as well as conventional. Charlotte Arthur offers at least \$10 in prizes each issue.

Quickeness Seed, The, 367 Derr Rd., Columbus, Ohio. Clarence L. Weaver, editor. (Q-25) Prizes: donated books, subscriptions; one contest a year with a cash prize of not over \$5. Cc. "Unusually report at once, but sometimes up to three months."

Shards, Box 2007, Augusta, Ga. Constance Deming Lewis, editor. All types of verse if not too long. Reviews and literary articles. "One \$10 and one \$5 award each issue, three subscriptions, and frequent book prizes. We also pay for articles by authorities." Cc. "Report promptly."

Tramp, The, P. O. Box 397, Anacortes, Wash., George W. Sherman, editor. Reports in two or three weeks. Cc. Annual competition for the \$25 prize limited to contestants who have not yet published a book of verse.

VERSE MAGAZINES OFFERING OTHER AWARDS AS PAYMENT

American Weave, 1559 E. 115th St., Cleveland, Ohio. Loring Eugene Williams, editor. (Q-\$1 a yr.) Interested in lyrical verse. Prefers "American flavor, but not pure propaganda." Four book prizes each issue. Cc. Two weeks.

Candor, "a magazine of truth and poetry for people of refined and artistic temperament." Fuxico, Mo. Elvin Wagner, editor. (M-10, \$1 a yr.) Sixteen lines or shorter preferred. Donated book prizes. No Cc. "Reports very promptly."

Country Bard, The, Staples, Minn. Margarette Ball Dickson, literary editor. (Q-35, \$1 a yr.) "No contractions or inversions, futility or vulgarity." Prizes (unspecified) of \$25 or more value in toto. No Cc. Three weeks.

Driftwind, N. Montpelier, Vt. Walter John Coates, editor. (M-25, \$2 a yr.) Regional, descriptive, with a special Vermont section. "Idealistic ballads, lyrics, and other forms up to 50 lines. Do not want commercial verse or poems of frustration." Prizes usually books. Cc. "Reports promptly."

Expression, 221 W. Broadway, Paterson, N. J. James Gabelle, editor. (Q-25) Verse up to 28 lines. Book prizes. No Cc. "Reports at once."

Lantern, The, 62 Montague, Brooklyn, N. Y. C. B. McAlister, editor. (Bi-M-25) Devotes one or more issues a year to some one contributor. Usually offers either a book publication contest or a prize poem anthology competition. Free copy of anthology sent each writer represented. Cc. One month.

Poetry Caravan, Rt. 1, Lakeland, Fla. Etta Josephine Murley, editor. Beginning with this Winter issue, the magazine becomes *Poetry Caravan and Silhouettes*. The latter's former editor, J. N. North, and Kathleen Sutton will be added as associate editors. Three book prizes each issue and "from time to time . . . contests with cash prizes." No Cc. Three weeks.

Talaria, 500 Palace Theatre Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio. B. Y. Williams and Annette P. Cornell, editors. (Q-35) Some reviews and verse-news personals. No definite requirements as to form, but "Poetry being an Art, technique is inseparable from quality." (Features cover reproductions from the Cleveland Art Gallery) Cc. Three weeks.

Voices, 45 E. 55th St., New York, N. Y. Summer address, Vinalhaven, Me. Harold Vinal, editor. (Q-\$2 a year.) "Interested only in the best work of contemporary poets. This Winter issue is its 100th issue, an Anniversary number. 2Cc. Reports promptly."

Wings, Box 332, Mill Valley, Calif. Stanton A. Coblenz, editor. (Q-\$1 a year.) Does not care for free verse but has no taboo on themes. Book prizes. Cc. Three weeks.

MAGAZINES AND CONTESTS SPONSORED BY UNIVERSITIES BUT OPEN TO OUTSIDERS

Aerend, The, Hays, Kansas. F. B. Streeter, editor. "Short verse preferred. 2Cc. "Reports as promptly as possible."

Kenyon Review, The, Gambier, Ohio. John Crowe Ransome, editor. Seven to ten pages of poetry each issue, with 25 to 34 lines to the page. Pays \$10 a page. "We use verse written in the modern tradition, lyrical and intellectual qualities emphasized." Cc. "Reports promptly; takes longer if the material is being seriously considered."

Prairie Schooner, Station A, Lincoln, Nebraska. Lowry C. Wimberley, editor. General literary periodical. "A medium for the finest writing of the prairie country." Uses about eight poems up to 60 line length an issue. Cc. One month.

Tanager, The, Box 66, Grinnell, Ia. Henry Alden, editor. Uses only two or three poems an issue. 2Cc. One month, longer over the summer.

University Review, The, 51st St. and Rockhill Rd., Kansas City, Mo. Alexander Capan, editor. (Q-35, \$1.25 a year) Has such contributors as Masters, Thomas Hart Benton, and Louis Untermeyer, but is also open to newcomers. 3Cc. Three weeks.

Virginia Quarterly Review, The, 1 West Range, University, Va. Pays 50c a Line; "We try to report within two weeks."

Westminster Magazine, The, Oglethorpe University, Ga. James Routh, editor. (Q-50, \$1.50 a yr.) Prizes of \$25 and \$12 an issue; a new department of poetry by college students. No welcome for frite or archaic versifying. Cc. "Reasonably prompt." (Formerly **Borzart-Westminster Magazine**.)

Yale Series of Younger Poets, New Haven, Conn. This contest will continue. "The rules have only one change. The date for closing is now to be March 1st instead of May 1st in order to allow the judges extra time for considering the MSS. and preparing the winning one for early fall publication." This contest is open to poets under thirty years of age who have not yet published a book.

VERSE MAGAZINES WHICH IN GENERAL OFFER NO PAYMENT OR PRIZES—INCLUDING SOME PERIODICALS ONLY PARTLY DEVOTED TO VERSE

Creative Writing, 152 W. Schiller St., Chicago, Ill. Rob't and Margaret Williams, editors. (M-25, \$2 a yr.) Uses two to twelve poems an issue. Cc. Two weeks.

Fantasy, 950 Heberton Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. Stanley Dehler Mayer, editor. (Q-25) "Uses longer verse than the average magazine. Very free, very modern work preferred." Cc. Two to six weeks or even longer.

Foothills, 1208 Eighteenth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. (Q-25, \$1 a yr.) John Zeigler, editor. Nicely mimeographed; about half its space devoted to good quality experimental verse. Contributors awarded free subscriptions. "No set time for reporting on manuscripts."

Matrix, 410 North American Bldg., Philadelphia, Pa. Hollis Alpert, editor. (Bi-M) Uses a few short poems in each issue, in addition to short-stories; occasionally features a long poem or number of poems by writer of unusual talent. No restrictions on subject-matter or form. No payment.

Modern Quarterly, The, 16 St. Luke's Pl., New York, N. Y. V. F. Calverton, editor. (M-35, \$1.25 a yr.) "Little verse used, but that of the highest quality. Editorial policy radical, though not rigidly Marxian. Free subscriptions to contributors." Four weeks.

New Anvil, The, 3569 Cottage Grove Ave., Chicago, Ill. Jack Conroy, editor. (M-15, \$1.50 a yr.) B. C. Hagglund Pub. Uses verse of strong social significance.

Poet Lore, 30 Winchester St., Boston, Mass. Eisig Silber-schlag, editor. (Q-36 a year.) Only high quality verse wanted. Originals or translations. Any length. Payment in copies of the magazine.

Southern Literary Messenger, 109 E. Cary St., Richmond, Va. F. Meredith Dietz, editor. (M-35) Revival of magazine once edited by Edgar Allan Poe. Sponsors such contests as the recent Lanier awards totalling \$125. "Preference given Southern authors and those who have something to say of interest to the South. No more stories, at present, of Negro or sub-marginal people." Reports in two weeks.

Southwest Review, The, Southern Methodist U., Dallas, Texas. Uses little verse and that usually has a Southern or South-western flavor. "though never a magnolia-and-mint-julep atmosphere." Cc. Two weeks or more.

Step Ladder, The, 4917 Blackstone Ave., Chicago, Ill. George Steele Seymour, editor. (M, except July-August, 20c) All forms and lengths. Must be work of real excellence.

Trails, Esperance, N. Y. Fred Lape, editor. "A quarterly averaging 15 poems an issue. Nature and human element poems." Cc. One week.

SPECIALIZED VERSE MAGAZINES—INCLUDING THOSE GIVING PREFERENCE TO MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS

Amber and Amethyst, Box 5804, Cleveland, Ohio. Flozari Rockwood, editor. ("Issued thrice a year"; "a Club anthology restricted to members of Modern Bards," 50c a copy.) Dues of \$1.50 a year bring its three "brochures of verse" and representation in each issue "if poems meet the editorial standards." Reports within a week on this and two other publications by the same editor. **The Notebook** and **The Garrett**, also Box 5804, Cleveland, Ohio. **The Notebook** is "a pocket-sized compendium" (five issues a year, 30c each). Does not accept poems longer than 16 lines from non-subscribers. More than sixty poets in each issue, biographical sketches featured. **The Garrett**, Where **Poets Meet** (Q-35, \$1 a yr.) No line limit. Uses cuts of contributing poets. Books, subscriptions, and some cash prizes for each issue.

College Verse, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyo. Ann Winslow, Exec. Sec'y. (M-30, \$2 a yr.) Nov. to May inclusive. For undergraduates, mostly. Annual awards and, usually, monthly prizes. Since all contributors are members of the College Poetry Society of America, all get Cc's automatically. Better query.

Lyrical Poetry, San Benito, Texas. Ben and Isabel Hagglund, editors, report: "We send out contributors' copies. Contributors are NOT required to subscribe." (Plan of asking contributors to buy 5 copies of issue in which poem appeared has been dropped.) Lyric verse, 24 lines or less; distinct singing quality required.

Pasque Petals, Aberdeen, S. Dakota. (M-35) Mainly for S. Dakota poets. No outside verse solicited. Edited by Gertrude Gunderson at Mitchell, S. Dakota.

Poetry Review, The, American office, 299 Park Ave., New York, N. Y. Am. ed., Alice Hunt Bartlett. Organ of the Poetry Society of England. Membership brings the magazine, but it can be subscribed for separately. If interested, better query Mrs. Bartlett.

Prairie Wings, N. Rockford, N. Dakota. Grace Brown Putnam and Anna Ackerman, editors. (M-\$1 a year) A four-page publication of the N. Dakota Poetry Society. Donated book prizes. "A month or two."

Singing Quill, The, 251 W. Eighth Ave., Columbus, Ohio. Tessa Sweazey Webb, editor. (Q-25) Published by the Presbyterian Poetry Society of Ohio, but membership is not limited to Presbyterians. One \$10 prize for each issue. No Cc to non-members.

NEWSPAPER COLUMNS WHICH PAY

Oregonian Verse, Portland, Oregon. Ethel Romig Fuller, editor. Weekly column in *The Oregonian*; prefers short lyrics, wholesome themes. Needs to have seasonal poems submitted at least three months in advance. Pays \$1 each, 10th of month following pub. Cc sent.

Poem a Day, 2130 Verde St., Pasadena, Calif. Daily column, edited by Edith Cherrington and Jean Rasey, which has taken the place of California Verse; syndicated by Exclusive Features. In market for poems about people; requires brief sketch of the poet—vocation, accomplishment, hobbies, etc. Fair rates, Pub.

COLUMNS AND RADIO PROGRAMS OFFERING NO PAY

An Author's Scrapbook; Ralph Cheney's, formerly called **Peaks and Peaks**, "Uses little poetry; short, clever social criticism in verse." Same editor also conducts **Reveille of Peace** for *Peace Digest*. Wants quotable anti-war verse for that. Wants short poems of social vision and western spirit for **This Singing West**, poetry department of *Frontiers*. Prefers western authors. For **Trumpets on New Horizons** uses quotable lyrics of humanitarian, labor, international emphasis. This appears in *Unity*, Chicago, Ill. Cc. sent contributors to all these columns. Address: 923 E. Mountain, Pasadena, Calif.

Bright Mosaic, a department of poetry and reviews in *W. Los Angeles Independent*, 1216 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Los Angeles, Calif. Dion O'Donnell, editor. Monthly book prizes and other awards. Cc. Unused MSS. back in ten days if postage is enclosed. "Write for details."

Conning Tower, The, *The New York Post*, New York. Franklin P. Adams, editor. A contributors' free-for-all. One of the best known columns in America. No Cc. Returns unused MSS. if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

Contributed Verse, *The Indianapolis Star*, Indianapolis, Ind. A weekly column using shorter poems.

Golden Bridle Column, *Kansas City Journal*, Kansas City, Mo. John Milton Smith, editor. Sends Cc. to out-of-city contributors. Returns unused MSS. if return postage is enclosed.

Golden Windows, *Bonner Springs Chieftain*, Bonner Springs, Kansas. Now edited by Myrta Fenton. On alternate weeks **Trail of the Seasons** is used; Ralph J. Donahue, editor. Both send Cc. The latter uses mostly nature poems, unpublished or reprints.

Hartford Times, Hartford, Conn. Martha L. Spencer, poetry editor. Unused MSS. returned promptly if stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Accepted verse placed on file and perhaps used a considerable time later. Cc. to out-of-city contributors.

Hoosier Homespun, *Indianapolis News*, Indianapolis, Ind. Timely, humorous, and nature poems.

Line O' Type or Two, *Chicago Tribune*, Chicago, Ill. Another famous column on the American scene. Also a free-for-all for contributors. No pay. Returns MSS. if a stamped, self-addressed envelope accompanies it. "Send 'em back right away usually."

With the Poets, Station W D A F, Station of *The Kansas City Star*, Kansas City, Mo. In submitting verse to be used on this Saturday morning program (11:15-11:30 C.S.T.), include permission for its use without payment. Submit MSS. to E. N. Brown, care W D A F.

MAGAZINES TO BE QUERIED BEFORE SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS

Aerial, 645 South Mariposa, Los Angeles, Calif. Organ of Radio Poets Club. (Bi-M \$1.50 a year) Byron Dunham, editor.

Circle, The, Box 194, Wellesley, Mass. Marcia L. Leach, editor. (Q-35)

Cycle, Homestead, Fla. Lily Lawrence Bow, editor. (Q-35)

Palms, Grant, Mich. Elmer Nichols, editor. (M-25)

Poetry Digest, 220 W. 42nd St., New York, N. Y. Alan F. Pater, editor. (M-25) Contributor states that after agreeing to buy copy of its anthology, in order to obtain publication, it raised the price.

Skyline, 167 Public Square, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. Lucille Chenot, poetry editor.

Verse Craft, Emory University, Atlanta, Ga. Lawrence Wilson Neff, editor. (Five issues, \$1 a year.)

Visions, Rancho Monte Vito, Alpine, Calif. Sand Dune Sage, editor. (Bi-M, \$1 a year)

Wheel, The, 309 E. 23rd St., New York. Evelyn Caminier and Raphael Hayes, editors. A magazine planned but not yet in print. Has such members on its advisory board as Louis Untermeyer and William Rose Benet.

VERSE PUBLICATIONS REPORTED DISCONTINUED

American Fireside, Verse-Land Press, Otsego, Michigan. Also *The Verse-Land Anthology*.

Berkley Poetry Magazine, 221 W. Broadway, Paterson, N. J. "Suspended."

Better Verse, Medford, Oregon.

Frontier and Midland, Missoula, Montana.

La Paloma, 221 W. Broadway, Paterson, N. J. "Suspended."

Midland Poetry Review, 854 S. Harrison St., Shelbyville, Ind. "Has merged with **Sigma Xi Magazine** (Q-35, \$1 a yr.) Organ of Sigma Iota Xi, a fraternity of poets. The magazine is also open to non-members. Cash and other prizes each issue. Loren Phillips now edits the magazine." (Do not confuse this with publications of Sigma Xi, the national honorary society in scientific research.)

Silhouettes, formerly 303 Rosewood Court, Ontario, Calif. Merged with **Poetry Caravan**. J. N. North, former editor, can be reached at 2123 Monroe St., Amarillo, Texas.

SCORN NOT THE BOOK REVIEW

. . . By BRYLLION FAGIN



N. Bryllion Fagin

MOST writers look upon book reviewing as a sort of stepchild, as not legitimately belonging to them, and therefore not deserving their concern. They wake up to its value only after they have published a book, and then they either crow or gnash their teeth. They do not seem to be

aware that book reviewing is an important branch of creative writing and can be profitable to its practitioners in more ways than one.

Let us admit at once that few writers depend upon book reviewing for their livelihood. The work is hard and ill-paid. But so is writing pulp fiction, which requires quantity production if it is to be made profitable. And how many poets can we name who earn more than pin money from the writing of poetry? With the exception of staff writers and a few free-lancers who specialize in book reviewing, literary critics look upon their work as a mere sideline. Practically all of them write fiction, articles, essays, poetry, or even plays as their major product. Book reviewing is resorted to either as a temporary expedient or as an occasional means of augmenting income. And it is a means not at all trifling in results.

My own experience is fairly typical. I have published some two hundred reviews, receiving in many cases nothing for them, except the book to be reviewed; in many more cases I have received anywhere from \$5 to \$35 a review. I have never regretted writing a single one of them. The experience has been valuable to me in my writing career. It has taught me many things about editors and their ways, about authors, about books and publishers, and, especially, about writing.

First and foremost, I have learned something about reading a book. There are fundamental spots in books which untrained readers often miss. There are tricks of construction, subjective revelations, characteristic expressions, eloquent overwriting and underwriting. To see

these and to give them proper interpretation is to know the author. To understand a writer's intention and to evaluate his accomplishment are a critic's function. Every book reviewer in time learns to perceive quickly what an author aimed to do and how close to achievement he has come. Creative reading, essential to a reviewer, is a valuable asset to a writer.

Next in importance has been a familiarity with different forms of writing. Every *genre* has its own strong and weak points, and one soon learns that the playwright's technique is not that of the novelist, that the essayist can state things in a way that neither of the others can, and that poetry transcends mere statement. Certain plots are dramatic enough for stage presentation; others require the more subjective method of fiction. Certain theses demand the clearness of exposition and interpretation which only the essay can carry; others are too tenuous for mere prose.

Extensive reading is bound to stop a writer from committing tritenesses. Commonplace ideas for stories, conventional situations, stock characters, and clichés in phrasing are easily recognized as such only if one is widely read. A reviewer has a wonderful opportunity to acquaint himself with the best and the worst of contemporary writing. It is inevitable that he ultimately come to apply his sense of literary values to his own more strictly creative efforts.

But, you will ask: How does one get started as a reviewer? Most publications have a permanent staff and use outside contributions only infrequently and by invitation. All that is true, and yet new reviewers somehow get started every day. Perhaps your local newspaper might not object to printing an occasional book review if it could get it. Why not call upon the editor, taking along a few good reviews to be left with him for his consideration? Pick important, vital books or, if chance favors you, books of special interest to the local community. In other words, pick books that are "news." Perhaps a new magazine, even if only a trade paper, has just been started in your section of the country. A polite note to the editor, enclosing a review of a recent book in which his readers might be especially interested, may give you an opening. But you must be careful not to convey the impression that you are a publicity agent for any vested interest.

Dr. Fagin is a member of the English faculty at Johns Hopkins University. He contributes regularly to both scholarly and general magazines. His most recent book is "America Through the Short Story," (Little Brown); "An Introduction to Creative Writing" is being published this fall by Prentice Hall.

From there into the national reviewing media is not so difficult—if you are good. Here your best approach is through a review of a minor yet fairly important book. Publications of the type of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, the *New York Times Book Review*, the *Herald-Tribune Books*, or the *Christian Science Monitor* will not entrust an unknown reviewer with a new novel by William Faulkner or a new historical work by Professor Beard. My first offering to the *International Book Review*, which for many years was an important monthly supplement to the late *Literary Digest*, was a 300-word review of a French novel. That short piece made me a regular contributor to a “paying” reviewing medium of national circulation.

And that first review taught me a few valuable lessons. I had been given the book by its English translator, a friend of mine, and I read it on the train on my way back from New York. I thought the novel unusually interesting and felt like telling the world about it. Also I wanted to help my friend, the translator. Hence I wrote the review, favorable but not “raving,” and sent it to a publication of large publicity value. It was a bold stroke, but it worked. The review was an honest sharing with the reading public of one man’s enjoyment of a good novel. A week later I wrote another review and placed it in *The Double Dealer*, a literary monthly then published in New Orleans. This, too, was honest, for the reviews, though both were favorable, were quite different.

And that difference is another lesson. The first review began with the sentence, “Can a novel contain the burden of philosophic thought and reflection and remain an interesting story?” The second review began with the statement, “Much has been said of late about the sex novel in America.” It is clear that each had a definite angle of approach and hence there was little repetition. An angle, made clear in the first sentence, if possible, is a good thing with which to begin a review; it “places” the reviewer as well as the book reviewed.

My first review contributed to the *New York Times* was of an old volume I picked up for a dime in a second-hand bookstore, “What to Read, and How to Read.” My “angle” this time

was expressed in the title I gave to my review, “Literary Ratings of Fifty Years Ago.” The author of the book, Charles D. Moore, M.D., writing in 1871, had divided all authors he knew into classes of excellence and his judgments were interesting. Thus he had deemed Cervantes, Balzac, Hugo, Dickens, Thackeray, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Nathaniel Hawthorne worthy of inclusion into his class One, along with Bulwer-Lytton, Maria Edgeworth, Disraeli, and Charles Kingsley. Below them, in class Two, he placed Poe, Melville, Manzoni, Emily Brontë, and George Meredith, along with the Reverend Barham, Emily Carlen, and Miss Pardoe. A more recent contribution to the Review Section of the *Times* (February 5, 1939) was a 1600-word article on a book published in 1791.

A few simple principles every reviewer must observe:

He must always remember that he is not half as important as the book he is reviewing. Don’t try to be too personal, clever, learned or “cute.”

The reader wants to know, and the editor wants him to know, that such and such a book by such and such an author has been published by such and such a publisher. The form in which this essential information is to be stated differs with each publication. Note the editor’s preferences, and whether he also wishes to indicate the year of publication, the number of pages, and the selling price of the book.

The reader wants to know whether the book is a novel, a play, a biography, a poem, or an essay, and something of what it has to say. But he does *not* want a detailed synopsis, extended quotations, and/or a complete summary.

It is legitimate for a reviewer to point out errors of fact, but attacking an author for not holding views dear to the reviewer is not fair criticism.

It is wise to cultivate a special field. Learn all you can about fiction, poetry, drama, economics, sociology, etc., and become, if possible, an authority in that field. Don’t scatter your forces: you can’t be an expert in everything.

Lastly, brevity and brightness help a review as much as they help any other piece of writing. Digression, long-windedness, and dullness are unpardonable sins.

WHAT RIGHTS DOES THE PUBLISHER GET?

By ROGER SHERMAN HOAR, M.A., LL.B.

Mr. Hoar is author of “Hoar on Patents” and of considerable fiction under the pen-name of “Ralph Milne Farley.”

WHEN an author sells a story, what rights does the publisher get? There are very few court decisions on this question.

The term “serial rights” has been defined as including *all* magazine and newspaper rights,

but excluding book, dramatic, and motion-picture rights. *New v. Star*, 220 Fed. 994. Thus, contrary to a quite general belief among authors, the seller of serial rights in a novel *cannot* thereafter market the right to reprint the novel

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non-serially, i.e., in one issue of a magazine.

With the above understanding, "first serial rights," "North American serial rights," etc., become clear.

If a story is sent to a magazine without restriction, and a check comes back without a statement as to what rights are bought, how do the parties stand? There are two legal theories on this.

One point of view is that of the majority of the court in the case of *Dam v. Kirk*, 175 Fed. 902, namely, that the sale of a manuscript without reservation carries *all* rights of reproduction.

But it seems to me that the dissenting opinion in that case is much more logical. Judge Ward said:

Sending a story to a periodical and receiving back a check for the same is as consistent with selling the story for publication in the periodical only as it is with selling it outright. If to this be added a receipt for the check, as payment in full for the story, the case is not advanced. A receipt is always open to explanation.

This case was decided by the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals of the Second Circuit, which embraces New York, where most of the publication houses are located.

Until some other circuit passes on the question, and it then goes to the Supreme Court of the United States, the majority opinion of the *Dam* case is likely to prevail.

Accordingly, authors are advised to specify on their manuscripts what rights they offer. Most magazines are satisfied with first North American serial rights. Very few insist on more than all serial rights. A few insist on all rights, but with the proviso that the proceeds of sales will be split with the author, or even (in some cases) will be given 100 per cent to the author.

Of course, specifying on the manuscript what rights are offered is effective only if the editor does not specify differently on his check or in the letter accepting the manuscript, in which event the author's only recourse is either to accept payment on the broadened basis, or return the check and demand either his manuscript or a recognition of his own original terms.

If an author sells less than all rights, he is entitled to a limited partial assignment of copyright. But it would probably be tactless to ask for this unless and until insisted on by some later purchaser of other rights.

□ □ □ □

THIS WAS ANOTHER ONE!

'Tis hunger makes mere crumbs a feast,
For man likes most what he gets the least.

What I like least I get the most:

Rejections from the SatEvePost!

—Alexander Poke.

LITERARY MARKET TIPS

The American Sunday-School Union, 1816 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa., writes that it is in the market for a book manuscript which will be a worthy successor to its previous best seller, "Silver Trumpet." "This is not a contest. A succession of titles will be added to this line when manuscripts of the type and quality desired have been received. For each manuscript accepted the American Sunday-School Union will pay \$1000 outright, plus 5 per cent royalty on sales above two thousand copies. To be acceptable the manuscript must be a novel above 60,000 words in length. It should champion the ideals of Christian living as set forth by Jesus Christ in the New Testament. This should be done, however, in accord with the American Sunday-School Union's long established principle of confining itself to the clearly defined teachings of the Bible which are accepted by all evangelical Christians. Religious arguments and theological discussions are taboo, and objectives must be achieved by convincing action rather than by didactic teaching. Writers are not restricted as to setting or historical period. The treatment must be equal to the best of present-day novel standards, and should appeal to young people.

Macfadden Publications, Chanin Bldg., New York, are preparing to launch a new magazine. Lyon Mearson, editor, reports a need for first-person stories or articles in which the interest centers around love letters. "For instance, a story told in the form of letters between men and women would be within our policy. We are not limited, however, in form, and are interested in any type of first-person material where the focal point of interest has to do with love letters. A story, for instance could be built around the fact that two lovers were separated through the non-receipt of a letter which had been sent. In this case, the mere fact that the action was motivated by a love letter would make it suitable for our new magazine. In a word, anything that has to do with written communication—which is rooted in sincere and honest emotion—would be interesting to us."

True, 1501 Broadway, New York, is now edited by Horace Brown, who succeeds Wm. Corcoran. *True* uses sensational true stories, especially detective stories with a woman angle—outstanding cases preferred. No stories involving child victims or Negro principals. Official by-lines preferred. Rates are 2 cents a word minimum with a \$300 rate for 20,000-word book-lengths, on acceptance. Photos bring \$3 each on publication, for those used.

Champion Comics, 1 E. 42nd St., New York, should have been listed last month as using short-stories of from 1000 to 1500 words. Leo Greenwald, president, asks that the notice be corrected by calling for story synopses not over two pages in length, each to be a story in itself, or new and original sequences for the strips already running in the magazine. For these synopses the Worth Publishing Company will pay \$10 each on acceptance.

Good Photography and Photography Handbook, 1501 Broadway, New York, Fawcett magazines published on a twice-yearly basis, are now edited by Stanley Gershin, who succeeds Robert Hertzberg.

Fictioneers, Inc., 210 E. 42nd St., New York, is a newly launched pulp magazine group, occupying the same offices as Popular Publications, but constituting a separate company. The new titles which will appear under this imprint are as follows: *Starling Mystery Magazine*, devoted to short-stories and novelettes of eerie mystery and terror, with sex elements; *Fighting Aces*, devoted to war-air yarns; *Love Short Stories*, using romantic fiction; *Astonishing Stories*, science fiction in novelettes and short-stories; *Sinister Stories*, using terror-mystery fiction; *New Western*, using Western fiction. All are bi-monthlies. Full details are not at hand, but a response to our wire to the company just before going to press states that varying rates will be paid for stories on acceptance.

Everyone's Magazine, 34 W. 33d St., New York, is announced as a forthcoming new magazine. John Meyer, editor, states: "We seek material of the widest range—short-stories, articles, literary fragments, poetry, jokes—indeed, anything and everything that makes good reading. Short-stories may be of all lengths, from 200 words up to 5000, and of every conceivable kind, from a typical pulp magazine tale to the kind of story of, say, *Story Magazine* type. Articles should have a topical slant, but can be on most any subject. Our idea for *Everyone's Magazine* is to incorporate in each issue a bit of most every magazine, from *The Saturday Evening Post* to the veriest pulp. We promise quick readings. Rate of payment will be 1 cent a word and up, for stories and articles, 25 cents a line for poetry, and \$2 each for short jokes, with payment on acceptance."

Golf Magazine, 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, Richard E. Lauterbach, managing editor, writes: "Beginning with our April issue we shall include one fiction story which doesn't necessarily have a golf background. However, the story must be timely in nature insofar as sports are concerned. If the Kentucky Derby is one of the big sporting events in May, our May issue might include a short-story with a racing background. These stories should have more emphasis on good writing than on plot. We will consider all lengths up to 2000 words; in very rare cases, slightly longer. Our rates are 2 cents a word, on publication."

The Culinary Arts Institute, Inc., a subsidiary of Consolidated Book Publishers, 537 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, specializes in the production of cook books and other books of interest to women. Ruth Berolzheimer, director, writes: "We are always in the field for manuscripts of any length, provided they deal authoritatively with the subject they attempt to handle. We are not interested in food faddists or poetry or other esoteric slants. We prefer material from the pens of women who have degrees in Home Economics or allied subjects. Our arrangement with the writer will be based on the type of manuscript she submits. If she cares to write us before she submits it, we shall be glad to correspond with her."

Mademoiselle, 1 E. 57th St., New York, should be listed as paying on publication, instead of acceptance, writes Johanna E. Hoffman, managing editor.

TALENT SCOUT

Seeks New Writers

Short stories, articles, books, plays wanted for leading U. S. and European markets. Small reading fee covers thorough study of your material by author and editor of twenty years' experience. If it is salable, it is sold, my ten per cent commission deducted, and the reading fee returned with the check. If it falls short of marketable quality, the reading fee covers a complete criticism, pointing out where the material is at fault and showing you clearly just what you must do to put it in acceptable shape.

This is a practical service for practical writers. I will go to any length to aid and encourage ambitious workers, even if they are rank beginners, but I don't want "wishers." If you feel you can write—if you have written something you believe should sell—send it along at once. I'll sell it, or show you to your own satisfaction what is wrong and how to make it right.

Reading fee and return postage must accompany all manuscripts: Short stories, fifty cents per thousand words to 6000; three dollars to 15,000; five dollars to 30,000; ten dollars for book lengths. Ask for folder, "Money For Your Manuscripts." It's free. *And send that story in today!* Address it to

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The Country Gentleman, Independence Square, Philadelphia, in a recent issue, comments that in order to buy approximately three dozen short-stories and three serials annually its editors read from 5000 to 7000 short-stories and from 100 to 150 book-length manuscripts. "Probably half of this material comes in unsolicited, direct by mail, and a great deal of it, of course, is amateurish. But now and then we pick a newcomer out of the mailbag, work with him, watch him develop, and eventually see him become a star performer. That is called 'discovering an author' and it is a genuine thrill to the editors." The editors state that from \$60,000 to \$70,000 a year is spent on the magazine's fiction program, exclusive of illustrations and editorial salaries.

Baby Talk, 424 Madison Avenue, New York, is a monthly magazine of information on the welfare of infants and mothers of infants. Articles on pre-school children's well-being, care, recreation, and education, containing authoritative information but not medical advice, are used, running from about 1000 to 2000 words. Payment is at approximately 1 cent a word, with a minimum of \$15 and a maximum of \$20.

M. S. Mill Co., Inc., 286 Fifth Ave., New York, book publishers, write: "We are not interested in the usual lending library type of fiction, but are looking for books which combine skilled writing with a worthwhile story; novels of the contemporary American scene, love stories with sound characterization and good writing, historical novels of the type of Shirley Seifert's 'The Wayfarer,' which we published last season. The company issues a Circle Mystery series, and states: "Our Circle Mysteries are selected only after passing a critical examination by an editorial board, and are chosen with reference to high standards of writing, characterization, and novelty of plot."

The Arts & Decoration Book Society, 116 E. 16th St., New York, is interested in examining books, popularly written, but not technical, relating to the general subjects of furnishing, decoration, and architecture. Critchell Rimington, editorial director, states: "They should be as practical as possible, preferably written for the reader of average income. We should be glad to consider books in related fields, such as lively biographies of famous artists, musicians, etc., but volumes on art appreciation or criticism do not fit into our plan."

M. N. Bunker, handwriting expert, Linn Creek, Mo., writes: "I am in the immediate market for forgeries, together with the originals, to be used in a text-book on forgeries. Specimens should be in ink if possible. Checks, deeds, wills, anything that comes within the proper definition of forgery—that which is forged or counterfeited. All accepted will be paid for immediately at a minimum of \$2. Unusual specimens of forgeries or handwriting of criminals who have made the front pages repeatedly will be worth as much as \$5. Unaccepted matter returned immediately if stamp is enclosed."

Modern Age Books, 342 Fourth Ave., New York, announces a new policy, under which it will issue cloth-bound books as well as paper-bound. Its separate imprint, The Starling Press, which was established last March for cloth-bound editions, has been discontinued.

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AGNES C. HOLM

1711-J Spring Street Racine, Wisconsin

Weird Tales, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, announces that it will pay \$10 each for acceptable letters dealing with actual experiences with the supernatural—strange dreams that came true, ghosts, haunted houses, etc. Any chill-producing, spine-tingling experience that actually happened is eligible.

10 Story Book, 30 E. Eighth St., Chicago, Ill., is finding itself unable to make the payment on acceptance promised some months ago. Indications are that the company (Sun Publications) was hard hit by the losses entailed by its recently discontinued *Golden Fleece*, and that checks for stories will be very much delayed for some time to come.

Tomorrow, 1257 Tamarind Ave., Hollywood, Calif., designed for young people of high-school and college ages, instead of offering no payment as at first announced, is now offering a low rate of payment for all accepted material, writes Barbara Spalding, editor. Articles and stories will be considered, preferably written by those under 25. It is desirable to state age when submitting manuscripts.

Matrix, 410 North American Bldg., Philadelphia, a bi-monthly, seeks short-stories of 1000 to 3000 words, with emphasis on character, and poems, but can offer no payment, states Hollis Alpert, editor.

The Atlantic Monthly, 8 Arlington St., Boston, announces that its controlling interest has been sold by Ellery Sedgwick to Richard E. Danielson and associates. Mr. Sedgwick, former editor, a year ago turned over the editorship of the 72-year-old magazine to Edward Weeks. No changes in policy are contemplated.

Civil War Stories, 461 8th Ave., New York, is a new pulp magazine launched by Fiction House, Inc., on a quarterly basis and using the type of fiction indicated by its title.

Mechanix Illustrated, 1501 Broadway, New York, edited for the Fawcett group by Robert Hertzberg, is interested in science and mechanical features of from 1500 to 2000 words. Liberal rates are paid on acceptance.

Master Comics, *Slam Bang Comics*, and *Whiz Comics* are new publications in the cartoon and comic field launched by Fawcett Publications, 1501 Broadway, New York.

Oscar Graeve, fiction editor of *Liberty*, passed away during the latter part of November. No announcement of his successor has been received.

Orlin Tremaine Co., 105 W. 40th St., is a new book publishing firm launched by F. Orlin Tremaine, writer and magazine editor, until recently connected with Street & Smith. The new company will publish fiction, a Latin-American library, and non-fiction works.

The Horse Lover, 139 Borica Way, San Francisco, Calif., is a new publication published by the California Horse Lovers Association. The need here is for articles of from 500 to 1500 words of interest to this group. Illustrations are welcomed. Rates are low, and are arranged individually with each author.

For Married People Only, 67 W. 44th St., New York, should be listed as paying not more than 1/2 cent a word for material, on publication, according to a letter received from the editor by a contributor.

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I replotted a short story for Don James Johnston, Columbus, Ohio, as his first submission in a six months' course of Plan 11. The short reworked to a novelette length that sold to Standard Magazines on the first trip out. Mr. Johnston writes, "It was a dud short yarn until you worked your magic with it. . . ." Sales consideration for short stories \$1.00, or send stamp for folder.

Special consideration of short-short stories and ideas, fifty cents each, until further notice. If salable as received, I'll offer the story for sale. If the idea is good, but needs finished treatment, I'll make a percentage offer for the work. Unpromising pieces returned with brief criticism. Please enclose return postage.

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Jane Hardy was formerly on the editorial staff of Macmillan Company. She is highly recommended by Harold S. Latham, Ida Tarbell, Henry Goddard Leach, Hamlin Garland, and others.

Send for circular, and for letters of recommendation from George Horace Lorimer, H. L. Mencken, John Farrar, William C. Lengel, H. E. Maule, William Allen White, Marie M. Meloney, H. C. Paxton, Fulton Oursler, Thayer Hobson, Marjory Stoneman Douglas and others.

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The Bryl Syndicate, 5026 S. Throop St., Chicago, is reported by a contributor to have made no report on a manuscript submitted more than six months ago, and to pay no attention to inquiries.

Railroad Magazine, 280 Broadway, New York, is returning manuscripts with the information that it is overloaded with fiction.

Motor Topics, 22 East Twelfth St., Cincinnati, Ohio, advises that effective with the January issue, it will be changed to a pictorial format. It will be issued in rotogravure and the need will be for good, newsy, interesting photos and captions, of interest to motorists. Articles are no longer needed, states C. B. Schroth, of the editorial department. Rates are 1 cent a word, \$2 for photos, on publication.

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PRIZE CONTESTS

Liberty, P. O. Box 556, Grand Central Station, New York, in connection with Town Hall, New York, is conducting a cartoon contest, with a first prize of \$1000, second of \$300, and five of \$100 each. Cartoons must depict the ideal of "How the Town Meeting Idea Can Best Preserve American Liberty and Democracy." Drawings must be approximately 14 by 16 inches, on white Bristol board, in India ink, pencil, or charcoal, suitable for published reproduction. Until contest is decided, signatures must appear on back of cartoon, not on the face. Closing date, February 21, 1940. Address Patriotic Cartoon Contest.

Alabama College, Motevallo, Ala., the state college for women, conducts an annual playwriting contest for Southern authors. \$40 is offered for the best long play and \$10 for the best short one. The current contest closes March 1, 1940. Those interested should write for a set of regulations. Address Walter H. Trumbauer, Director of the College Theatre.

Milton Berle, 500 Fifth Ave., New York, offers \$10 each for jokes acceptable for use on the radio program, "Stop Me If You've Heard This One."

The Oregonian, Portland, Ore., offers \$1 each for best two letters within 100 words published each week on "Pet Peeves," describing what act or acts on the part of your associates "rile you almost past endurance."

The Contest Reporter, Box 2341, Hollywood, Calif., offers a first prize of \$5, second of \$2.50, and third of \$1 for best solutions to a set of nine picture puzzles accompanied by an article of not more than 250 words on "How I Won in the ——— Contest." Article must contain the actual winning entry, and prize must have been won within last six months. Closing date, March 1, 1940. Puzzles will be sent by the Puzzle Editor on receipt of 3-cent stamp.

The O. Henry Memorial prize of \$300, for the best short-story published in an American magazine during the past year, was awarded to William Faulkner for his story "Barn Burning." Second prize of \$200 was won by James Still for "Bat Flight."

The Mary Roberts Rinehart Mystery Novel award of \$1000 offered by Farrar & Rinehart has been awarded to Clarissa Fairchild Cushman for her manuscript, "I Wanted to Murder."

The 1939 Nobel Prize for Literature has been awarded to Frans Eemil Sillanpaa, Finnish novelist, best known in America for his novel, "Meek Heritage" (Knopf).

The winner of the All-Nations Prize novel competition has been announced as Robert Henriques, a major in the British army. His novel, published in this country by Farrar & Rinehart, is entitled "No Arms, No Armor."

What will YOU do with 1940?

Gamble it on trial and error? Or follow successful writers like Miss Winkler—work **professionally**, through a leading agency—get the maximum return from your writing and build a permanent literary career?

Seventeen years' success in developing new writers into regularly selling professionals backs my contention that I can also help you. Lenniger clients are constantly encouraged, coached and pushed into better markets and toward broadening their appearances. Through my personal contact with editors these writers are posted on exact market needs **today**. They receive suggestions, tips and editorial orders, for it's an agent's job to keep after openings his clients can fill. And they are kept producing their **best**, by constant critical appraisal of their work.

If you have talent, such help should enable **you** to achieve your goal for 1940—whether you wish to graduate from pulps to slicks, to increase your sales in either field, or even to make your **first sale**.

TO NEW WRITERS:

I honestly appraise your work and recommend salable scripts to editors requesting such material. If a story is unsalable, I tell you **why** in full detail; if revision will make it salable, I explain how and for which specific market to rewrite. I analyze your abilities and suggest markets for which you should work. Until I sell \$1,000. worth of your work, the above professional guidance costs \$1.00 per thousand words on manuscripts up to 5,000; on scripts 5,000 to 11,000 my fee is \$5.00 for the first 5,000 words and 75c for each additional thousand. Special rates on novelets and novels.

TO SELLING WRITERS:

If you want an agent who will keep you working full capacity and who really pushes your manuscripts—talk it over with me. If you have sold \$1,000. worth of fiction in 1939, I will handle your account on my regular commissions of 10% on American, 15% on Canadian and 20% on foreign sales. If you have sold \$500. worth during 1939, I will handle your work at one-half reading fee.

My booklet, *Practical Literary Help* and my latest market letter, free on request.



Henrietta Winkler

"I suppose I don't need to tell you how pleased I was over the checks for the four stories just sold. All I can say is that my association with you in 1939 has been a profitable one. If anyone had told me at the beginning of this year that I would earn well over a thousand dollars just by writing, I'd have thought them 'screwy.'" It still seems like a dream, after the five years I struggled alone with only one little sale to my credit!"

AUGUST LENNIGER

Literary Agent

56 W. 45th St., New York, N. Y.

BUSINESS MAGAZINE DEPARTMENT

Edited by JOHN T. BARTLETT

Machinery, 140-48 Lafayette, New York, is for designing and manufacturing executives in all classes of machinery building plants, and therefore affords scant market for the free-lance. F. D. Jones is associate editor.

Better Letters in Business, 4416-18 Ellston, Chicago, which recently broadened its editorial scope to include articles on direct-by-mail campaigns, writes that, to start out, direct-by-mail articles will be very selective. "They will be restricted to the letters of manufacturers" writes M. A. Wagner of the editorial department. "In other words, we want the efforts of firms that fit the general run of business firms rather than special cases."

Southern Printer, Mortgage Guarantee Bldg., Atlanta, Ga., has been edited by Ray Warwick for the last four months. Mr. Warwick is attempting to build the editorial contents of the magazine to make it of much greater value to its southern subscribers. Heretofore many general type articles have been used, but in the future all material must be backed up with scientific names and definite methods of handling some problem. Mr. Warwick is attempting to pass promptly on all material.

The Insurance Salesman, 222 E. Ohio, Indianapolis, Ind., C. C. Robinson, editor, has asked that listing in the Quarterly Market List be discontinued. Writes Mr. Robinson: "It seems to be almost impossible for a free-lance writer to get our slant, so I have just about reached the conclusion that it is not fair to your readers to continue showing the *Salesman* as a possible market for their work."

Electrical Week, 480 Lexington Ave., New York, has been discontinued.

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Luggage and Leather Goods and Handbag Buyer is the complete title of this Haire publication published at 1170 Broadway, New York. Payment, on publication, of ¾ cent a word, is made for articles describing successful merchandising plans used by department store handbag and luggage departments. Pictures of unusual window displays and interior layouts are also desired. Arthur I. Mellin is editor.

Laundry Age, 9 E. 38th St., New York, is making changes in its editorial staff. Ralph Rockafellow is no longer with the publication. Letters concerning manuscripts are being signed by I. O. Spellman, co-editor.

The National Nurseryman, Hatboro, Pa., has been merged with *American Nurseryman*, 508 So. Dearborn St., Chicago.

Display World, 1209 Sycamore St., Cincinnati, pays upon publication (rate depending on value of article) for articles of 500 to 1500 words dealing with display from expert angle. "But we are very infrequently a market," warns R. C. Kash, editor.

Music News, 310 So. Michigan Ave., Chicago, does not buy any free-lance material.

Construction Methods and Equipment, 330 W. 42nd St., New York, has shortened its name to *Construction Methods*, and streamlined its entire presentation. More space has been provided for pictorial display and announcement of feature editorial material; a three and two-column makeup supplants the previous four-column page; body type has been made more readable, headlines have been restyled, and pictorial layout improved.

West Coast Druggist, 407 E. Pico St., Los Angeles, Bert Butterworth, publisher, writes: "We have streamlined the contents of our publication, have eliminated all long, drawn-out articles, speeches, and theoretical discussions, and have digested all of this news into capsule form for the busy druggist to read. The result is that the publication offers little market for the free-lance writer."

American Roofer, 425 Fourth Ave., New York, is in the market for material accompanied by pictures showing show-room interiors and the men in roofing companies. Good rates are paid on publication. Bernard Sachs is editor.

Western Paint Review, 1206 Maple Ave., Los Angeles, is not in the market for outside material at the present time. "Our own staff takes care of our editorial needs," writes Ann Miller of the editorial department.

Canadian Paint and Varnish Magazine, 481 University Ave., Toronto, wishes it to be stressed that this paper is more or less of a technical and industrial type of publication, so cannot use articles on retail paint and varnish dealers. Managing editor is R. L. Southall.

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The Grain & Feed Review, 408 So. 3, Minneapolis, reports files pretty well filled up at the present time. W. D. Fleming, editor, usually uses a small amount of promotion material, paying around \$3.50 a 1000 words on publication.

Hotel Bulletin, 260 Tremont St., Boston, informs that a great many recipes are received direct from chefs, with the result that purchases of recipes are seldom made. W. C. Pank is editor.

Pacific Coast Record, 510 W. 62nd, Los Angeles, Mary Hill, business manager, reports that most material used is sent in gratis; thus it is seldom necessary to purchase articles from outside sources.

Sports Age, with which is combined *Sporting Goods Journal*, 250 Fifth Ave., New York, is in the market for specific merchandising promotions tersely written and well illustrated. Ames A. Castle is editor.

American Camera Trade, 22 E. Twelfth St., Cincinnati, is particularly interested at this time in candid shots of camera dealers while at home or in their off moments outside the store, according to Robert Parker, managing editor. For personality items, 40 cents each is paid. Features must be boiled down, preferably to not more than 500 words, and should be accompanied by a picture.

Mortuary Management has moved to 202 Robertson Bldg., Beverly Hills, Calif. R. K. Willett, editor, welcomes good merchandising articles concerning actual funeral parlors and mortuaries. Lengths up to 2000 words with suitable illustrations. Rates are 1 cent a word and up, on publication.

Photographic Dealer, 6060 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, Calif., C. J. Ver Halen, Jr., editor, is a magazine for the photographic supply dealer, using articles suitable for the trade up to 1000 words. The biggest market is for 100-word items coming under the heading of "Sales Ideas" which may or may not be accompanied by illustrations. Payment for these is at \$1, with photos extra. Rates for other material, 1/2 cent and up.

West Coast Druggist, 1622 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood, Calif., A. Butterworth, editor, is interested in articles from 500 to 1500 words of particular interest to West Coast druggists. No fiction or poetry. Candid camera shots are used, which bring \$1 and up. Rates are 1/2 cent and up for fact material.

Spirits, formerly published at 220 E. 42nd St., New York, is now located at 29 W. 57th St. The change was effective December 4.

Intimate Apparel, 250 Fifth Ave., New York, has moved, left no address.

Western Meat Dealer, 1001 Lowman Bldg., Seattle, Wash., is now entirely staff written, reports Edwards Webber, managing editor.

ED BODIN

Ed Bodin, age 45, author, editor—and agent for past ten years, formerly with publishers of Collier's, American and Woman's Home Companion, sells to all markets, slick or pulp. He has three classifications of clients: Professional, Semi-Professional and Selected Apprentice. He averages more than 100 sales a month.

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This series, by the editor of *The Author & Journalist*, began in the September, 1938, issue. The first twelve lessons are now available in book form under the title, "The Technique of Salable Fiction." The purpose is to discuss fundamentals of fiction technique from a standpoint that will prove helpful to the professional as well as the beginner.

XVI—PLOTS THAT NEED BOLSTERING

Straining the probabilities in order to bring about a necessary development in a story is one of the common faults of the amateur. Unfortunately, it also represents a temptation often faced by the professional.

There are numerous ways in which the probabilities of a situation, or of human motives, may be strained. Outstanding among them, however, is what we may term the "misunderstanding" plot.

A typical form of the misunderstanding plot runs as follows:

The heroine becomes incensed at the man she loves, because she has reason to believe that he is untrue to her. In her pique, she accepts the attentions of a rival, whom she does not love. Later, she finds that she was mistaken about the dereliction of the hero.

This situation is the basis of a vast number of amateur stories. Its development ranges in intensity from the yarn in which the heroine merely breaks a date with her lover and has a mild flirtation with the villain before learning the truth, to the more serious story in which she marries the wrong man during her fit of pique.

The reason for the heroine's act is her acceptance of some bit of circumstantial evidence, or a story carried either by a well-meaning or malicious acquaintance, or perhaps a distorted story brought to her by the rival himself. It may be her personal observation—as when she sees the hero kissing another girl (and learns later that it was a sister or some other close relative). Whatever the circumstances, the whole story depends upon her failure to do a fairly logical thing—that is, to give her loved one the benefit of the doubt and investigate the facts of the case.

If she did this, the story would collapse. And a story that rests upon failure of a character to act in a logical, normal way, rests upon a very shaky foundation.

True, such an incident as that which we have been considering *might* happen. But the average reader, prone to judge all human nature by his own nature, is pretty certain to reason: "I wouldn't have acted so hastily in the heroine's place. It would have occurred to me that the story, or the circumstantial evidence, might be misleading. I would have investigated—given the fellow a chance to explain. I wouldn't have been such a sap as to believe everything that was told to me."

Primarily, it is because the basis of such an incident is false that the sense of inevitability is lacking. The facts of the case are that the hero (in the typical story which we are considering) was not untrue. Circumstances conspired to make him seem untrue; or he may have been the victim of a frameup or a bit of malicious gossip. When the heroine accepted and acted upon the false assumption, she strained the probabilities. Even if she strained them ever so little, the convincingness was marred.

Any number of "stock" plots, now chiefly found in the stories of inexperienced writers, are based upon

similar misunderstandings. That is to say, the character in the story acts upon a false assumption, which a nominal amount of investigation would have cleared up. Following are typical examples:

The story in which a man kills another (as he supposes) in a fight and runs away. Years later, he learns that the other man was not killed, but recovered.

The reverse of the story employed in our opening illustration, in which the hero mistakenly believes something detrimental to the heroine and breaks with her, without giving her a chance to explain.

The story in which one character assumes the guilt for a crime he did not commit, because he thinks a close friend or a loved one (or some one dear to the loved one) committed it. Later developments show that his assumption was false.

The same story, in which two characters assume the guilt, each mistakenly thinking that the other committed the crime.

One of the fairly recent popular motion pictures, "Wells Fargo," laid in Civil War days, was based largely upon such an incident. Hero and heroine were ideally, happily married. The heroine's trouble-making mother sent a note signed with her daughter's name to an officer in the Confederate army forces, notifying him that a gold shipment which the hero was conveying, would be sent over a certain route. The Confederate forces, acting on this information, intercepted the convoy and a bloody battle ensued. After the battle, the hero found the note on the body of the dead officer. Since it appeared to have been sent by his wife, the hero, without explanation of any kind, refused to return to her and had no communication with her for some twenty years.

This created drama, and was "put over" by excellent acting. But the shaky foundation of the plot must have been felt by at least a portion of those who viewed the picture, even though they may not have analyzed their impressions. The situation does not stand up very well under analysis. Here was a man who had every reason to believe that his wife loved him. The fact that she had seemingly acted traitorously to him suggested a basic incongruity—and incongruities suggest investigation. Even if we go so far as to grant that a man in his position *might* have acted as he did, the motivation falls far short of the inevitability which makes for sound, convincing plot. We cannot help reasoning that a sane, reasoning husband would have considered the *possibility* of some explanation which would absolve his wife of the blame. With his whole happiness at stake, would he not have grasped at even this bare chance by giving her an opportunity to explain? It is worthy of note in this connection that, when they were brought together twenty years later, the man in this story accepted his wife's explanation without question.

The student may be tempted to remark that if such misunderstandings have been employed in successful motion pictures and successful stories (many of which

could be instanced) they evidently do not detract from the effectiveness of fiction.

This is not exactly the lesson to be drawn. Essentially, the author should realize that plots based upon misunderstandings are inherently weak. They need a lot of bolstering. Skillful writers often can "put them over" in story form and skillful acting can put them over in dramatic form. But it is just as well to bear in mind that a story which needs bolstering, because its motivation is weak or lacks the sense of inevitability, will never be a truly great story.

If a paradox may be permitted: Bolstering up weak plots is good practice, but it is poor practice to devise plots that need bolstering.

Bolstering up situations which may require such treatment is, of course, largely a matter of deft characterization. From a plot standpoint, it consists of making the evidence on which the misunderstanding is based as convincing as possible. Reverting to the situation at the beginning of this lesson, the circumstances which cause the hero to appear unworthy in the heroine's eyes must be so overwhelming that the reader cannot blame the heroine for believing them. She might anticipate the reader's objections by refusing to believe the evidence against her man—and then being confronted by still further and more convincing proof. The indications of his guilt might, indeed, be carried to the point where the reader would think it a trifle unconvincing that the heroine is able to resist them as long as she does. It is just as well to lean backward when our motivation is in danger of being considered shaky.

Bear in mind that achieving the sense of inevitability in character motivation requires this: When a story character does anything of importance, his or her reasons must be so conclusive that the reader's reaction is: "I don't see how any one, under the circumstances, could have acted otherwise."

Sound plot developments, like good building materials, achieve this goal because they are sound. Shaky

developments, strained developments, and acts based upon questionable misunderstandings may achieve it to an extent because they are deftly "bolstered." The inexperienced writer can far less afford to attempt the use of such incidents than the writer of experience—and the latter shuns them as a rule because he senses their lack of soundness.

PRACTICE SUGGESTIONS

1. Review stories and books you have read, or plays, motion pictures, and radio dramas you have heard, from the standpoint of their fundamental plot soundness. Can you recall any that were based upon misunderstandings? If so, do you sense any weakness in these stories? How were the misunderstandings "bolstered" up, so that the stories passed muster for convincingness?

2. Devise several situations in which the hero or heroine would be justified to an extent in believing that the other is untrue. Complete the exercise by devising logical explanations which reveal that the suspicions were unjust. Can you work out any plots of this type that satisfy you on the score of convincingness?

3. Try to recall, or devise, other types of story based upon misunderstanding.

4. For each of the examples of plots based on misunderstandings, as given in this lesson, and any that you have been able to supply in addition, try to supply convincing details which "bolster" the convincingness of the character's mistaken assumption.

5. Devise a story plot based upon a misunderstanding (avoiding as far as possible the trite examples given by way of illustration in this lesson). Endeavor to make the results of the misunderstanding of a serious or near-serious nature, but reveal the truth at the end. "Bolster" the plot by making the misunderstanding such that the reader would accept it without question, and write the story.

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